



**North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  
Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services**

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Michael F. Easley, Governor  
Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

Richard J. Visingardi, Ph.D., Director

October 15, 2003

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Area MH/DD/SAS Program Directors

**FROM:** Richard J. Visingardi, Ph.D.

Leah Devlin, State Health Director

**SUBJECT:** Early Intervention Transition

First of all, we would like to thank you for the active and supportive roles you and your early intervention staff have played in the recent transition planning meetings with the DEC/CDSA Directors and our Regional Early Intervention Consultants. With the ongoing involvement of your staff and other community agencies, each CDSA will be developing a written transition plan which will delineate a framework to assure that all of the specific types of early intervention services in the federal and state early intervention legislation continue to be available for children under three years of age. The plan will include such things as available resources, potential providers, etc.

While vacancies in your early intervention positions are certainly going to occur over the remainder of FY 03-04, because of the entitlement nature of early intervention, North Carolina must assure that services to these eligible children are not disrupted. As you know, outside of the six Area Program that requested to cease early intervention services as of July 1 of this year, the CDSAs can't expand their budgets or employees until July 1 of 2004. Consequently, we ask that in situations where such staff vacancies go beyond short term, you utilize your federal and state early intervention funds to contract for the necessary services. While the contracts would be with your agency, and the provider, please involve the CDSA Director in these decisions and deliberations to ensure good future continuity.

One of the positive outcomes of the recently conducted session of the General Assembly was the passing of the legislation establishing the early intervention Regional Interagency Coordinating Councils. There will be one Council per CDSA and it will serve as the CDSA planning arm in such areas as needs assessment, child find, program evaluation, and personnel development. In addition to these functions, the Council membership is specified in the legislation. Each must include a representative of one of the Area/County Programs in the CDSA catchment area. Nominations for the Councils are made through the current Local Interagency Coordinating Councils. Please be thinking about your recommendations for these Councils. A full copy of the bill can be found at the General Assembly's website:

<http://www.ncleg.net/html2003/bills/CurrentVersion/ratified/House/Hbil0932.full.html>

Attached is a schedule of the major Early Intervention Transition activities that will be happening between now and June 30, 2004. Also the EI Design Plan Interagency Transition Oversight Work Group, established by the Secretary to provide guidance to the changes to the new system, meets on a monthly basis - the third Wednesday at 10:30. Ellen Holliman with the Durham Center is the designated Area Director on this initiative. Your input and recommendations are welcome here as well.

We'll be keeping you posted on developments throughout the year. Please keep in touch with your Regional Early Intervention Consultants or CDSA Directors with any specific questions as they occur.

cc Secretary Hooker Odom  
Lanier Cansler  
James Bernstein  
Duncan Munn

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DMH Executive Leadership Team  
WCHS Early Intervention Branch

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